Hold fast to that which has neither substance nor existence.
—*Light on the Path*

THEOSOPHY

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THE WORK TO BE DONE

IN his *Letters,* Mr. Judge speaks of the "psychic whirl" which sometimes afflicts the life of the student, coming out of the past and clouding his perception by "throwing shadows on his path." And this, he suggests, "is only one consequence of our past Karma now burning itself out before our eyes." Elsewhere he speaks of the great force called by Boehme the "Turba," meaning "the immense power of the unconscious and material basis of our nature."

These are aspects of the troubles and trials of individuals, and they are not to be evaded by anyone belonging to the race. Yet, although they must be gone through, their power to delude, to mislead and enrage is much reduced by knowing that they must come, and that if left unnourished and unrenewed as influences they will finally pass away. In Mr. Judge's words:

> The whole phantasmagoria is only a picture thrown up against the Screen of Time by the mighty magic of Prakriti (Nature). But you and I are superior to Nature. Why, then, mind these pictures? Part of that very screen, however, being our own mortal bodies, we cannot help the *sensation* derived therefrom through our connection with the body. It is only another form of cold or heat; and what are they? They are vibrations; they are *felt*; they do not really exist in themselves. So we can calmly look on the picture as it passes fragmentarily through those few square feet contained within the superficial boundaries of our elementary frame.

There are times, we are told, when the entire battlefield seems engulfed in the Great War, and the disciple is hard put to remember

his true identity—when preserving an inner calm seems very nearly an impossibility. Yet, we are also told that it can be done. And if we ask, in natural anxiety, but *how,* the answer comes clear and essentially unchanged from the answer that was given in the beginning: the instruction is to work unselfishly for humanity *while striving to get rid of the strength of the personal idea.* Why is not the instruction more explicit? Again, the answer is unchanged: "The ways of doing this are left to his [the disciple's] own intuition entirely, inasmuch as the object is to develop that *intuition* and to bring him to *self-knowledge.*" And as for the importance of overcoming the personal idea:

> He who does not feel irresistibly impelled to serve the Race, whether he himself fails or not, is bound by his own personality, and cannot progress until he has learned that *the race is himself* and not that body which he now occupies. The ground of this necessity for a pure motive was recently stated in *Lucifer* to be that "unless the intention is entirely unalloyed, the spiritual will transform itself into the psychic, act on the astral plane, and dire results may be produced by it. The powers and forces of the animal nature can be equally used by the selfish and revengeful as by the unselfish and all-forgiving; the powers and forces of spirit lend themselves only to the perfectly pure in heart."

Will there some day be, one wonders, historians wise enough to recognize in large-scale human events the reflection of such forces as these? If great cycles of history are marked off by occult law and their forward impetus at the beginning given by high beings who sound the keynote of a period of evolutionary growth, would not the major trials and failures of the race have a somewhat similar explanation? What of the agonies sometimes brought down upon whole nations by the terrible righteousness of leaders who, cherishing a limited application of a moral idea, come to identify its enforcement as a duty placed upon them, by either supernatural authority or by supposed insight into the very laws of nature? What, indeed, but mixed motives could animate these popular mass movements which engender apparently resistless anger and fear, in the midst of Kali Yuga?

A wise European scholar, now long dead, observed in 1928: "Our age is the age of political hatreds. It will be one of its chief claims to notice in the moral history of humanity." So this is a time, one may think, when the energy of past failures is being exhausted—when moral ideas, having originally a spiritual origin, have been

transformed into the psychic and are producing dire results by seeming to justify the most terrible of actions. In the perspective of the present, then, it is easy to see the prophetic wisdom of H. P. Blavatsky, who declared the Theosophic view of politics many years ago:

> To seek to achieve political reforms before we have effected a reform in *human nature, is like putting new wine into old bottles.* Make men feel and recognize in their innermost hearts what is their real, true duty to all men, and every old abuse of power, every iniquitous law in the national policy, based on human, social or political selfishness, will disappear of itself.

It is of interest to notice that while every political panacea, every utopian claim requiring ruthless enforcement by armed might for its supposed realization, may be traced in its origins to some traditionally respected moral idea, the unwillingness of the champions of these programs to work for or await *a change of heart* in their opponents reveals their ignorance of the true means to all human progress. While the general improvement of mankind will involve action at many levels, including, no doubt, what men regard as political means, there is the further consideration, as H.P.B. notes, that "political action must necessarily vary with the circumstances of the time and with the idiosyncrasies of individuals," making it impossible to lay down hard-and-fast rules concerning which social efforts are wise and which unwise. Since self-knowledge and a grasp of the true processes of human evolution are involved in all such decisions, they must be largely individual. However, Madame Blavatsky offers this general test:

> Will the proposed action tend to promote that true brotherhood which it is the aim of Theosophy to bring about? No real Theosophist will have much difficulty in applying such a test; once he is satisfied of this, his duty will lie in the direction of forming public opinion. And this can be attained only by inculcating those higher and nobler conceptions of public and private duties which lie at the root of all spiritual and material development. In every conceivable case he himself must be a centre of spiritual action, and from him and his own daily life must radiate those higher spiritual forces which alone can regenerate his fellow-men.

It becomes apparent that individual attitude rather than elaborate, detailed programs is the criterion for social action in Theosophy. As H.P.B. said elsewhere of Theosophists:

> None know more keenly and definitely than they that good

> works are necessary; only these cannot be rightly accomplished without knowledge. Schemes for Universal Brotherhood, and the redemption of mankind, might be given out plentifully by the great adepts of life, and would be mere dead-letter utterances while individuals remain ignorant, and unable to grasp the great meaning of their teachers. . . . Yet it is an absolute fact that without good works the spirit of brotherhood would die in the world; and this can never be. Therefore is the double activity of learning and doing most necessary; we have to do good, and we have to do it *rightly,* with knowledge.

How extraordinary is the balance we find in the great, nineteenth-century Teacher of Theosophy on this difficult question! One can locate in H.P.B.'s writings support for some aspect of every one of the social ideals which have been turned into angry, partisan causes in the present—but never support which can be claimed for programs of "political" manipulation or drives to obtain power over others. In *The Key to Theosophy,* quoted above, are clear statements concerning the importance of providing a better environment for those suffering from misery, poverty, and disease. "True evolution," she says, "teaches that by altering the surroundings of the organism we can alter and improve the organism; and in the strictest sense this is true with regard to man." Ameliorating social efforts, therefore, will have the support of Theosophists, she says, adding, however, that such efforts should seek "the development of the sense of duty in those who now so often neglect it in nearly every relation of life." Upon reflection it becomes obvious that no politics seeking aid from the "powers and forces of the animal nature" could ever accomplish this; and a similar qualification must apply to the high praise given earlier to the society depicted in Bellamy's *Looking Backward* which, she says, "admirably represents the Theosophical idea of what should be the first great step towards the full realization of universal brotherhood." Here it is not the form, or certainly not the form alone, that is praised, but the relation of Bellamy's scheme to the reduction of "causes tending to create and foster selfishness" to a minimum. The typical dependence of political reformers upon social forms alone caused her to write, elsewhere: "Unconcerned about politics; hostile to the insane dreams of Socialism and of Communism, which it abhors—as both are but disguised conspiracies of brutal force and sluggishness against honest labour; the Society cares but little about the outward human management of the material world." Yet in the *Key,* speaking of the attitudes of Buddha and Christ, she exclaimed: "Both reformers were ardent

philanthropists and practical *altruists—preaching most unmistakably* Socialism of the noblest and highest type, self-sacrifice to the bitter end."

At the same time, Madame Blavatsky explicitly repudiated the methods of violent revolutionists, making specific reference to the extremes of the French Revolution. But she did not hesitate to trace the desperation of the oppressed and their love of liberty to causes deep in human nature, contrasting the motives of angry leaders of great historical upheavals with the moral apathy of the comfortably situated and well-fed. Speaking of "All-denying protestators, Atheists, Nihilists, and Anarchists, men of the Terror," she wrote:

> Bad, violent, criminal some of them may be, yet no one of them could stand as the copy of Satan; but taking this heart-broken, hopeless, embittered portion of humanity in their collectivity, they are just Satan himself. . . . In the very depths of the heart of this HUMAN Satanic totality burns the divine spark, all negations notwithstanding. It is called LOVE FOR HUMANITY, an ardent aspiration for a universal reign of Justice—hence a latent desire for light, harmony and goodness. Where do we find such a divine spark among the proud and the wealthy? In respectable Society and the correct orthodox, so-called religious portion of the public, one finds but a predominating feeling of selfishness and a desire for wealth at the expense of the weak and the destitute, hence as a parallel, indifference to injustice and evil. Before Satan, the incarnate PROTEST, represents and reunites with his fellow men in one common Brotherhood, all cause for protest must have disappeared from earth.

Yet all such changes, H.P.B. makes plain, will come only with the dying out of false doctrines and the spread of truth concerning man's nature and his potential divinity. Wars and brutal suppressions will continue, as she notes in *The Secret Doctrine,* until "we begin acting from *within,* instead of ever following impulses from *without* (I, 664), and Peace Societies will remain utopian so long as race hatreds and sectarian and social antipathies are attacked from the outside. Progress in brotherhood can only come, she maintained in "Our Three Objects," through recognition of "the fact of the Higher Self—colourless, cosmopolitan, unsectarian, sexless, unworldly, altruistic."

What we see, in short, in these various discussions of what men term "social problems" is a return to the *origins* of now materialized social ideals and objectives in the teachings of the Wisdom-Religion, where, before they were torn from their context and made the

basis of partisan contention, they had the profound consistency of doctrines concerned with soul-growth and the spiritual evolution of mankind. It is the materialism of the spiritual transformed into the psychic, into the narrow claims of political ideology and partisan righteousness, that has made the present an age of political hatreds and a vortex of maturing Karma during what must be one of the climactic phases of the Black Age. These limiting conceptions brought forward from the past, armed by the same intensities which gave Duryodhana's forces their cohesive determination, must wear themselves out before another age can be born. It is, one could say, a special case of the exhaustion of the limitations imposed by the very conditions of man's intellectual evolution. "Outside of initiation," H.P.B. observes in *The Secret Doctrine,* "the ideals of contemporary religious thought must always have their wings clipped and remain unable to soar higher; for idealistic as well as realistic thinkers, and even free-thinkers, are but the outcome and the natural product of their respective environments and periods." So it is that in a time of the settling of accounts between the races, when long-sleeping dogs of fear and suspicion are awakened by institutional failure and vast historical change, the sense of being engulfed may threaten even the sturdiest of souls.

Yet all these crises and turmoils have been met before, in other cycles of history, and souls have survived to go on to better things. It is during such raging crises of history, as the *Gita* points out, that the gods incarnate among men; and again, in such times that foundations are laid for future harmony—built partly indeed, by preservation of that calm of which Mr. Judge speaks, and by the doing of work which remains to be done.

THEOSOPHICAL CORRESPONDENCE CLASS

[The following writings of William Q. Judge first appeared, respectively, in the *Path,* November, 1893, and January, 1894. We reprint this material for its intrinsic value, quite apart from the merits of the program involved, so that readers of THEOSOPHY, and especially, perhaps, members of the United Lodge of Theosophists, may have Mr. Judge's forthright declaration of the "basis, genius, and spirit" of the present Movement.—Editors, THEOSOPHY.]

I

PRELIMINARY PROSPECTUS AND NOTICE

THE increase of the purely routine work of the General Secretary's Office has made it impossible to fully reply to all the numerous questions put in letters, and enquirers have to be referred to books after the first usual correspondence has passed. But this does not do away with the needs of sincere enquirers, nor with the necessity for study and the obligation to help members to grasp the teachings of Theosophy so that they may be able to help others in their turn by presenting Theosophy and the aims of the T.S. in a reasonably clear manner to questioners. Many members also require help because of the hurry of our present life and from previous lack of training in metaphysical investigation. The different needs cannot be fully met by the issuance of Branch Papers and the *Forum,* as these are necessarily limited in area of influence.

Having been offered assistance by some competent members, I have decided to start a CORRESPONDENCE CLASS as a part of the work of the American Section T.S., to enable those members desiring to avail themselves of it to pursue their studies in Theosophy more systematically so that they may thereby gain a better understanding of the philosophy of Theosophy and its application to daily life, thus making it more certain that the growth of the Society shall not merely be in numbers but also in the Theosophical education of the units composing the whole body—at least in so far as concerns the American Section.

METHOD OF WORK

1. All members in good standing of the American Section, T.S. can join the Correspondence Class by applying in writing to the address given below.

2. Every three months, or oftener if warranted, a subject will be selected for study and a list given of books and articles which are to be read. Discretion is reserved to include at any one time more than one subject.

3. Questions bringing out the most important points of the subject will be sent to members of the class. The number of questions will be decided on after some trial.

4. Replies to these questions are to be sent to the office of the General Secretary, addressed as requested below, where they will be examined and returned to the senders with comments and suggestions in all particulars wherein they seem to require it or as enquiries made shall indicate.

5. Members will be permitted to send ONE question with each set of replies. Such questions will be made use of in the general questions. Discretion is reserved as to dealing or not dealing with irrelevant questions.

6. From time to time general notes and comments upon the replies, or a complete paper upon the subject, will be sent out to all, either with the next set of questions issued or independently.

7. Students will probably be divided into classes if such a method shall appear desirable, but this head may be altered as experience may indicate.

8. Hints as to methods of study will be sent with the first set of questions.

9. Members are not to reply to the questions until after the expiration of one month from the receipt of same, in order that they may have ample time to study and think over the subject, and also that the office may not be unduly burdened with work.

These regulations and methods are subject to alteration at the discretion of the office.

It is hoped that no member of the Society will take up membership in this Correspondence Class unless with the determination to keep up the work. Some of the questions may appear to be very simple, but in that case the student should endeavor to make more complete answers and to throw fresh light upon the subject.

As there will necessarily be expenses of postage, paper, and some printing, members of the class are requested to help in this matter by sending stamps for the return of their papers, and also, if they can, by sending an *extra* two or five cent stamp. The class ought to be self-supporting, though as yet that is not demanded.

Preliminary Questions

All members joining the class are requested to answer the following questions for the information of the office:

1. How long have you been a member of the T.S.?
2. What books have you studied and what merely read?
3. Have you written any papers for any Branch Meetings or Magazine, or have you delivered any addresses or lectures?
4. What topic, doctrine, or phase of Theosophy has struck you most forcibly or engaged your attention?
5. What books do you possess, and have you access to a Theosophical Library?

All communications relating to the Correspondence Class are to be addressed to: Secretary T.S. Correspondence Class, 144 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y.

Correspondents are asked not to mix the business of this class in letters relating to any other matter: if this request is not complied with, all such letters will remain unanswered so far as concerns the Correspondence Class, as the various departments of work in the General Secretary's Office are distinct from each other.

Non-Responsibility of the Theosophical Society

The Theosophical Society is not responsible as an organization for any view or opinion to be expressed or intimated in any of the papers, documents, questions, or answers in this class; nor is the Society in any way bound thereby: nor are any such views or opinions authoritative or to be deemed as the views or opinions of the T.S.: they are only individual views and opinions of those who express them.

William Q. Judge,
General Secretary, American Section T.S.

New York, October 19, 1893

II

SOME WORK OF THE CLASS

THIS Class was started in the American Section for the purpose of helping the members in the course of study and in all matters pertaining to the Society. Very soon after the first notice was given members began to come in, and at this date, December, one hundred and forty-six persons have joined, coming from all parts of the Section. No authority is claimed, and members are helped by comments made on answers and by reference to books and articles. At the same time it is likely that a large index or reference book may result from the work, referring to all sorts of articles and subjects in the whole field of T.S. literature. This in itself will be a valuable thing to have, and if means and energy warrant it might finally be gotten out in book form.

In the first list of questions the following among others was put:

What is the basis, genius, and spirit of the T.S. constitution?

Its object was to direct the mind to the organization itself, and to give an opportunity to personally with each one point out certain matters which ought to be better understood than they are, as the replies demonstrate. Some sample replies are here given without names.

39. I have been a member of the T.S. for eight years, and have never seen its constitution *nor ever heard of any.*

42. The basis of Theosophy is the revelations by letters and speech from Mahatmas; its genius and spirit, the teachings of eternal truths of nature and universe.

62. Its basis is the establishment of a Universal Brotherhood. Its genius is to awaken the sleeping soul of man to a knowledge of its true powers, its true work, its true destiny. To arouse and stimulate to action the untried, undeveloped forces of the soul. To lift man out of the illusions of matter that he may make a more steady and rapid progress toward his spiritual development and perfection. To teach him to estimate correctly between material and spiritual progress, just how much one is worth in comparison with the other and just *what* ends are *to be obtained with one or the other.*

Its spirit is to eliminate selfishness, to inspire in the individual a beneficent, universal love of humanity in preference to a selfish, personal love. To persist in an increasing endeavor to purify the

soul, lift the aspirations, ennoble the thoughts, not so much for the sanctification of self, as for the sake of purity and righteousness as principles of the Divine Will and for the maintenance of the Divine Harmony. And also for the psychical influences unconsciously engendered by holy thought and holy living. To eradicate error, false conceptions, mistaken interpretations. To annihilate prejudice and all systems of hasty, unjust conclusions. To follow out the golden rule "Do unto others as you would be done by." To incite to an exact uprightness *in all things*. To cultivate tolerance, patience, gentleness, sweetness, humility, and devotion in the cause of others.

41. The basis, genius, and spirit of the Theosophical Society is unselfishness, or the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man.

69. The basis of the T.S. is a belief in the unity of all life, spiritual and physical; its genius that this unity of all life brings us into such relations directly or indirectly with other races, nations, and brother men as to cause any injury done by one to another to mutually affect other races, nations, and men upon the earth. Its spirit is that of compassionate sympathy for, and mutual helpfulness to, all beings.

90. The basis, genius, and spirit of the T.S. Constitution are expressed in the first object and in its motto, "There is no Religion higher than Truth." It would unite men of all creeds and races in a bond of brotherhood and mutual toleration upon the common ground of Truth, which is the nucleus about which all creeds and dogmas have crystallized.

58. Sincere and earnest belief in the Masters of Wisdom seems to me to be the basis of the Theosophic Constitution.

9. The basis of the T.S. is the Brotherhood of Man; its spirit is entirely unsectarian and has no creed or dogma to promulgate; respectful tolerance is shown to all religions, creeds, and races of men; the genius of the T.S. is the desire to uplift humanity to a higher level.

33. Oneness, development, charity.

The above are fairly representative of all, and of the general spirit of the Section. They show that all have missed the gist of the question, which was directed to the organic law under which we work, but at the same time demonstrate that the true idea of the movement as a human development is pretty well understood. If the question had been as to the movement apart from the Constitution of the

Society, all the replies would have been very good. Number thirty-nine apparently saw the precise point from the reply that he or she had not even heard that there was a Constitution. But that also illustrates another thing, that it is possible to proceed vigorously with such work as ours even if the members do not think there is any organic law. Of course it would not do for officials to be ignorant of the Constitution, but it appears that if men are working as so many in the T.S. do work the law need not be known, inasmuch as they become in themselves the right law. However, the way to have replied properly to the question as put is something like the following:

"The Basis: (*a*) Equality of members irrespective of caste, sex, color, race, or creed; (*b*) Autonomy or self-government of all Branches and Sections; (*c*) Federation, in which, though each Branch and Section governs itself, all must act in conformity to the general Constitution; thus the Branches of a Section are under the jurisdiction of the federated Section and governed by its general law, which in turn must conform to the law of the whole T.S.

"In addition to the foregoing, the basis, genius, and spirit of the organic law or Constitution are autonomy, equality, non-sectarianism, non-dogmatism, absence of creed, and tolerance of opinion. The objects of the Society *are the aim* to which the Constitution is directed.

"The Theosophical movement as distinguished from its Constitution is based on fraternity and unity, its genius is the pursuit of truth and tolerance, its spirit is unselfishness leading it to spread the truth with tolerance and to work for the uplifting of the race.

"From all the above a branch might exist as one of the T.S. and be composed wholly of members who had a specific belief, provided they did not force it on others nor claim for the belief the endorsement of the organized Society."

letters • questions • comment

The things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. Can the soul be seen? What is the relation of the soul to the body?

If it were possible to separate the "temporal" from the "eternal" in any way but for the purposes of discussion, it would almost seem as if there would be no universe. At least it would be a very simple one to understand. For if the one "Be-ness" is really all-pervasive, then it must be inherent in every particle of matter, regardless of how temporal the form. The Proem of *The Secret Doctrine* says:

> Just as pre-Cosmic Ideation is the root of all individual consciousness, so pre-Cosmic Substance is the substratum of matter in the various grades of its differentiation.
>
> Hence it will be apparent that the contrast of these two aspects of the Absolute is essential to the existence of the "Manifested Universe." Apart from Cosmic Substance, Cosmic Ideation could not manifest as individual consciousness, since it is only through a vehicle of matter that consciousness wells up as "I am I," a physical basis being necessary to focus a ray of the Universal Mind at a certain stage of complexity. Again, apart from Cosmic Ideation, Cosmic Substance would remain an empty abstraction, and no emergence of consciousness could ensue.
>
> The "Manifested Universe," therefore, is pervaded by duality, which is, as it were, the very essence of its EX-istence as "manifestation."

Perhaps it is a question of whether we look at a given manifestation as spirit or as matter; that is, as a unified something, or as the diversified parts of something. The word eternal itself implies duration as to time. It implies that that which is eternal has inherent in it the capacity not only to endure change but to produce it and survive it; that is, to create new forms, to sustain and then to improve or replace them. Perhaps we should then distinguish between the power to create forms and that indescribable essence which is the synthesis of the power to create, preserve and recreate.

Also, it is not always possible to distinguish the temporal from the eternal on the basis of seen and unseen. Many human actions and institutions have no material form, yet have tenacity and per-

manence, while the essence of some very ephemeral forms, the beauty of flowers, the spirit of actions performed in season, endures long after the forms themselves have passed away.

It seems apparent that the key to discerning the real from the unreal lies in the doctrine of the seven-fold division of the universe. If man's immortal triad, Atma-Buddhi-Manas, can be considered as representation of the highest on the human plane, then it must bring into the world a quality of changelessness which the four lower principles do not possess, Atma-Buddhi-Manas being that absolute center around which all else revolves and by which it is sustained. If all manifested life partakes of this seven-fold embodiment, everything must have its eternal aspect, which remains unseen. But it should not be ignored that without an appropriate vehicle spirit cannot manifest itself.

The four lower principles being actually a reflection of the three higher, it seems that the relation of the soul to the body ought to be similar to that of an artist to his tools, the faculties of the body corresponding to their refinement and versatility. The quality of the result would depend as much on the skill of the artist in using the tools as on the quality of imagination and inspiration which he was able to "incarnate" into his work. But this in turn would depend on the measure of his devotion and forgetfulness of self; his whole being needs to be concentrated on the discovery of what excellence means and on producing it, *not* on how well *he* is doing or *appearing* to do. Ultimate success lies in continuity of *effort* on the mental plane no less than it does on the physical.

There is a sense in which the tools and the artist are One; for while the one must become the willing slave of the other, it seems that this would be impossible if the slave did not possess somewhere in his nature the potentiality of the master. In "Psychic and Noëtic Action," H. P. Blavatsky states that there is no special organ which is the exclusive seat of consciousness: "Occultism regards every atom as an 'independent entity' and every cell as a 'conscious unit.' It explains that no sooner do such atoms group to form cells, than the latter become endowed with consciousness, each of its own kind, and with free-will to act within the limits of law." Thus, by functioning as the servant of the higher nature, the lower nature is fulfilling its own destiny as well.

THE CHRISTIAN SCHEME

JESUS: *Was He Unique?*

THERE was but one apostle of Jesus worthy of that name, and that was Paul. However disfigured were his Epistles by dogmatic hands before being admitted into the Canon, his conception of the great and divine figure of the philosopher who died for his idea can still be traced in his addresses to the various Gentile nations. Only, he who would understand him better yet must study the Philonean Logos reflecting now and then the Hindu *Sabda* (logos) of the Mimansa school.

As to the other apostles—those whose names are prefixed to the Gospels—we cannot well believe in their veracity when we find them attributing to their Master miracles surrounded by circumstances, recorded, if not in the oldest books of India, at least in such as antedated Christianity, and in the very phraseology of the traditions. Who, in his days of simple and blind credulity, but marvelled at the touching narrative given in the Gospels according to Mark and Luke of the resurrection of the daughter of Jairus? Who has ever doubted its originality? And yet the story is copied entirely from the Hari-Purana, and is recorded among the miracles attributed to Christna. We translate it from the French version:

> The King Angashuna caused the betrothal of his daughter, the beautiful Kalavatti, with the young son of Vamadeva, the powerful King of Antarvédi, named Govinda, to be celebrated with great pomp.
>
> But as Kalavatti was amusing herself in the groves with her companions, she was stung by a serpent and died. Angashuna tore his clothes, covered himself with ashes, and cursed the day when he was born.
>
> Suddenly, a great rumor spread through the palace, and the following cries were heard, a thousand times repeated: *"Pacya pitaram; pacya gurum!"* "The Father, the Master!" Then Christna approached, smiling, leaning on the arm of Ardjuna. . . . "Master!" cried Angashuna, casting himself at his feet, and sprink-

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NOTE.—"The Christian Scheme," begun in November, 1967, is collated from the works of H. P. Blavatsky. It recounts the historical background and early development of Christianity.

ling them with his tears, "See my poor daughter!" and he showed him the body of Kalavatti, stretched upon a mat. . . .

"Why do you weep?" replied Christna, in a gentle voice. *"Do you not see that she is sleeping?* Listen to the sound of her breathing, like the sigh of the night wind which rustles the leaves of the trees. See, her cheeks resuming their color, her eyes, whose lids tremble as if they were about to open; her lips quiver as if about to speak; she is sleeping, I tell you; and hold! I see, she moves, *Kalavatti! Rise and walk!"*

Hardly had Christna spoken, when the breathing, warmth, movement, and life returned little by little, into the corpse, and the young girl, obeying the injunction of the demi-god, rose from her couch and rejoined her companions. But the crowd marvelled and cried out: "This is a god, since death is no more for him than sleep?"

All such parables are enforced upon Christians, with the addition of dogmas which, in their extraordinary character, leave far behind them the wildest conceptions of heathenism. The Christians, in order to believe in a Deity, have found it necessary to kill their God, that they themselves should live!

And now, the Supreme, unknown one, the Father of grace and mercy, and his celestial hierarchy are managed by the Church as though they were so many theatrical stars and supernumeraries under salary! Six centuries before the Christian era, Xenophanes had disposed of such anthropomorphism by an immortal satire, recorded and preserved by Clement of Alexandria:

There is one God Supreme. . . . . .
Whose form is not like unto man's, and as unlike his nature;
But vain mortals imagine that gods like themselves are begotten
With human sensations, and voice, and corporeal members;
So if oxen or lions had hands and could work in man's fashion
And trace out with chisel or brush their conception of Godhead
Then would horses depict gods like horses, and oxen like oxen,
Each kind the Divine with its own form and nature endowing.

And hear Vyasa—the poet-pantheist of India, who, for all the scientists can prove, may have lived, as Jacolliot has it, some fifteen thousand years ago—discoursing on Maya, the illusion of the senses: "All religious dogmas only serve to obscure the intelligence of man. . . . Worship of divinities, under the allegories of which is hidden respect for natural laws, drives away truth to the profit of the basest superstitions" (*Vyasa Maya*).

It was given to Christianity to paint us God Almighty after the

model of the kabalistic abstraction of the "Ancient of Days." From old frescos on cathedral ceilings, Catholic missals, and other icons and images, we now find him depicted by the poetic brush of Gustave Doré. The awful, unknown majesty of Him, whom no "heathen" dared to reproduce in concrete form, is figuring in our own century in *Doré's Illustrated Bible*. Treading upon clouds that float in mid-air, darkness and chaos behind him and the world beneath his feet, a majestic old man stands, his left hand gathering his flowing robes about him, and his right raised in the gesture of command. He has spoken the Word, and from his towering person streams an effulgence of Light—the Shekinah. As a poetic conception, the composition does honor to the artist, but does it honor God? Better, the chaos behind Him, than the figure itself; for there, at least, we have a solemn mystery. For our part, we prefer the silence of the ancient heathens. With such a gross, anthropomorphic, and, as we conceive, blasphemous representation of the First Cause, who can feel surprised at any iconographic extravagance in the representation of the Christian Christ, the apostles, and the putative Saints? With the Catholics St. Peter becomes quite naturally the janitor of Heaven, and sits at the door of the celestial kingdom—a ticket-taker to the Trinity!

In a religious disturbance which recently occurred in one of the Spanish-American provinces, there were found upon the bodies of some of the killed, passports signed by the Bishop of the Diocese and addressed to St. Peter; bidding him *"admit the bearer as a true son of the Church."* It was subsequently ascertained that these unique documents were issued by the Catholic prelate just before his deluded parishioners went into the fight at the instigation of their priests.

Unluckily for those who would have been glad to render justice to the ancient and modern religious philosophies of the Orient, a fair opportunity has hardly ever been given to them. Of late there has been a touching accord between philologists holding high official positions, and missionaries from heathen lands. Prudence before truth when the latter endangers our sinecures! Besides, how easy to compromise with conscience. A State religion is a prop of government; all State religions are "exploded humbugs"; therefore, since one is as good, or rather as bad, as another, *the* State religion may as well be supported. Such is the diplomacy of official science.

Grote in his *History of Greece,* assimilates the Pythagoreans to

the Jesuits, and sees in their Brotherhood but an ably-disguised object to acquire political ascendancy. On the loose testimony of Herakleitus and some other writers, who accused Pythagoras of craft, and described him as a man "of extensive research . . . but artful for mischief and destitute of sound judgment," some historical biographers hastened to present him to posterity in such a character.

How then if they must accept the Pythagoras painted by the satirical Timon, "a juggler of solemn speech engaged in fishing for men," can they avoid judging of Jesus from the sketch that Celsus has embalmed in his satire? Historical impartiality has nought to do with creeds and personal beliefs, and exacts as much of posterity for one as for the other. The life and doings of Jesus are far less attested than those of Pythagoras, if, indeed, we can say that they are attested at all by any *historical* proof. For assuredly no one will gainsay that as a real personage Celsus has the advantage as regards the credibility of his testimony over Matthew, or Mark, or Luke, or John, who never wrote a line of the Gospels attributed to them respectively. Withal Celsus is at least as good a witness as Herakleitus. He was known as a scholar and a Neo-platonist to some of the Fathers; whereas the very existence of the four Apostles must be taken on blind faith. If Timon regarded the sublime Samian as "a juggler," so did Celsus hold Jesus, or rather those who made all the pretenses for him. In his famous work, addressing the Nazarene, he says: "Let us grant that the wonders were performed by you . . . but are they not common with those who have been taught by the Egyptians to perform in the middle of the forum for a few oboli." And we know, on the authority of the Gospel According to Matthew, that the Galilean prophet was also a man of solemn speech, and that he called himself and offered to make his disciples "fishers of men."

Let it not be imagined that we bring this reproach to any who revere Jesus as God. Whatever the faith, if the worshipper be but sincere, it should be respected in his presence. If we do not accept Jesus as God, we revere *him as a man*. Such a feeling honors him more than if we were to attribute to him the powers and personality of the Supreme, and credit him at the same time with having played a useless comedy with mankind, as, after all, his mission proves scarcely less than a complete failure; 2,000 years have passed, and Christians do not reckon one-fifth part of the population of the

globe, nor is Christianity likely to progress any better in the future. No, we aim but at strict justice, leaving all personality aside. We question those who, adoring neither Jesus, Pythagoras, nor Apollonius, yet recite the idle gossip of their contemporaries; those who in their books either maintain a prudent silence, or speak of "our Saviour" and "our Lord," as though they believed any more in the made-up theological Christ, than in the fabulous Fo of China.

There were no Atheists in those days of old; no disbelievers or materialists, in the modern sense of the word, as there were no bigoted detractors. He who judges the ancient philosophies by their external phraseology, and quotes from ancient writings sentences *seemingly* atheistical, is unfit to be trusted as a critic, for he is unable to penetrate into the inner sense of their metaphysics. The views of Pyrrho, whose rationalism has become proverbial, can be interpreted only by the light of the oldest Hindu philosophy. From Manu down to the latest Swâbhâvika, its leading metaphysical feature ever was to proclaim the reality and supremacy of spirit, with a vehemence proportionate to the denial of the objective existence of our material world—passing phantom of temporary forms and beings. The numerous schools begotten by Kapila, reflect his philosophy no clearer than the doctrines left as a legacy to thinkers by Timon, Pyrrho's "Prophet," as Sextus Empiricus calls him. His views on the divine repose of the soul, his proud indifference to the opinion of his fellow men, his contempt for sophistry, reflect in an equal degree stray beams of the self-contemplation of the Gymnosophists and of the Buddhist *Vaibhâshika*. Notwithstanding that he and his followers are termed, from their state of constant suspense, "skeptics," "doubters," inquirers, and ephectics, only because they postponed their final judgment on dilemmas, with which our modern philosophers prefer dealing, Alexander-like, by cutting the Gordian knot, and then declaring the dilemma a superstition, such men as Pyrrho cannot be pronounced atheists. No more can Kapila, or Giordano Bruno, or again Spinoza, who were also treated as atheists; nor yet, the great Hindu poet, philosopher, and dialectician, Veda-Vyasa, whose principle that all is illusion—save the Great Unknown and His direct essence—Pyrrho has adopted in full.

These philosophical beliefs extended like a net-work over the whole pre-Christian world; and, surviving persecution and misrepresentations, form the corner-stone of every now existing religion outside Christianity.

Comparative theology is a two-edged weapon, and has so proved itself. But the Christian advocates, unabashed by evidence, force comparison in the serenest way; Christian legends and dogmas, they say, do somewhat resemble the heathen, it is true; but see, while the one teaches us the existence, powers, and attributes of an all-wise, all-good Father-God, Brahmanism gives us a multitude of minor gods, and Buddhism none whatever; one is fetishism and polytheism, the other bald atheism. Jehovah is one true God, and the Pope and Martin Luther are His prophets! This is one edge of the sword, and this the other: Despite missions, despite armies, despite commercial intercourse, the "heathen" find nothing in the teachings of Jesus—sublime though some are—that Christna and Gautama had not taught them before. And so, to gain over any new converts, and keep the few already won by centuries of cunning, the Christians give the "heathen" dogmas more absurd than their own, and cheat them by adopting the habit of their native priests, and practicing the very "idolatry and fetishism" which they so disparage in the "heathens." Comparative theology works both ways.

THE LIVING EARTH

How wise were the ancients who never lost sight of the religious significance of the earth! They used the land to the full, draining, ploughing, and manuring every inch, but their use was not an attack on its nature, nor was the ancient motherhood of earth ever forgotten in the breaking and preparing of the soil.

They knew, as all honest people know in their bones, that in any true sense there is no such thing as ownership of the earth and that the shadow of any man is but for a time cast upon the grass of any field. What remains is the earth, the mother of life as the ancients personified the mystery, the ancient mother in her robes of green or harvest gold and the sickle in her hand.

When farming becomes purely utilitarian, something perishes. Sometimes it is the earth life which dies under this "stand and deliver" policy; sometimes it is the human beings who practice this economy, and oftenest of all it is a destruction of both land and man. If we are to live and have something to live for, let us remember, all of us, that we are the servants as well as the masters of our fields.

—HENRY BESTON: *Northern Farm*

on the lookout

A Shaken Faith

These are days in which the best criticism of the misapplications of science often comes from morally aroused scientists themselves. A good instance of the new awareness among scientists is provided by an article in the Aug. 9 *Saturday Review,* "Basic Research and the Common Good," by Warren Weaver. A former president of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Mr. Weaver begins his discussion:

> I was brought up to accept unquestionably, that knowledge is inherently good: that new knowledge automatically and inevitably stimulates and creates activities that lead to and deserve the label "progress." Holding this belief, one can be comfortably assured that if he helps to advance knowledge in any field whatsoever, he is thereby—although, in truth, indirectly and unpredictably—contributing to the richness and significance of the lives of all individuals, and of society in general.

Dies Iræ (Day of Wrath)

This is a view which has been adopted by the public through the efforts of many popularizers and is responsible for the now almost pathetic faith, still remaining in older people, that "science" will find a way out of the terrible difficulties of the modern world. Mr. Weaver no longer has that unshaken faith. Like many others in his profession, he traces the awakening from simple belief in the "automatic" goodness of all science to the first atomic explosion on July 16, 1945, "when, as more than one distinguished scientist has stated, the physicists lost their innocence." Mr. Weaver continues:

> From that moment on, many other disturbing and worrisome cases have arisen. Should a scientist use his knowledge and skill to develop devices, materials, or procedures that are useful in war? Should biologists and medical researchers be involved in genetic developments, neurological experimentation, and transplant surgery that may destroy the integrity of individuals, may lead to methods of control over mental and emotional states, and may prolong life beyond the point of dignified and responsible activity?

Broad Awakening

This is enough quotation to show the temper of Mr. Weaver's inquiry, and the direction of his interest. He speaks admiringly of the "research strike" held last March 4 by both students and faculty at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, noting that similar demonstrations were held in some thirty research institutions across the country. By such means, and by the thoughtful discussions of researchers like Mr. Weaver, there may slowly but surely be generated a new and more responsible sort of public opinion in the modern world. An unanticipated effect of this change could easily be that the time will come when the need for philosophic support of this moral attitude will be widely recognized, with the result that the old prejudice against metaphysics and transcendental philosophy will blow away in the winds of an urgent demand for better intellectual foundations. The cycle has great encouragements in store, as well as harsh forebodings. Meanwhile, it is well to remember that the externals of current history constitute already precipitated effects, which are wearing away causes set in motion in the past, while the seeds of a better future, now to be seen in the changing attitudes of thoughtful men, get little or no attention from a press largely devoted to the most lurid aspects of whatever happens.

Revolt Against Positivism

In the *New York Times Magazine* (June 1), Andrew M. Greeley examines the current revival of interest in witchcraft on college campuses. To explain why even students who are not themselves involved in the pursuit of witchcraft or astrology nevertheless insist on taking seriously those who are, Mr. Greeley speaks of the widespread loss of faith in science as the royal road to Knowledge. As one graduate student put it:

> Let's face it, science is dead. While the newspapers and magazines were giving all the attention to the death of God, science was really the one that was dying.

"Imperialism" of Science

This teacher comments:

> The extent and depth of the revolts against positivism come as a considerable shock to those like myself whose training in the positive sciences took place in a time when they were totally unquestioned at the great universities. During the last winter

> quarter I put a statistical table on the blackboard and proceeded to explain the implications. One of my students respectfully but pointedly observed, "Mr. Greeley, I think you're an empiricist. In fact, at times I even think you are a *naïve* empiricist."

The student who went on to assert "that the 'imperialism' of science by which it claimed to be the only valid form of human knowledge and the only valid rationale for organizing society was completely unsatisfactory to his generation." A number of other students, Greeley reports, "rose to offer vigorous support to this position."

Another Cycle of Psychism

A secondary criticism of the scientific outlook might be added here. It will be recalled that in the nineteenth century, as the intruding tide of psychic phenomena and mediumistic wonders gained strength, not a few eminent scientists were drawn into the current of the cycle, sometimes becoming believers in Spiritualist doctrines that were shamefully superficial in content. These men, in short, were totally unprepared for demonstrations such as some of the mediums could offer, and found themselves defenseless against the psychologically shallow claims of the Spiritualists. Their materialism had made them vulnerable to suggestion. We are now seeing a repetition of these beguilements on a much more extensive scale, applying to the alienated youth as well as to many others. And this time the psychism involves lurid claims of supposed practitioners of sorcery or witchcraft, rather than merely the exploits of mediums.

Karma of Neglect

Lack of knowledge is not acceptable as an excuse for all this ignorance, since *Isis Unveiled,* first published in 1877, has long been available for study and might have armed present generations against too-easy beliefs and another cycle of miracle-mongering. Had the works of Madame Blavatsky been made use of by the men of science during the long years between her day and the present, the superficialities of profane and inverted reflections of the occult sciences would not now seem so attractive, and certainly not so profound, to the young. It must be admitted, however, that while these shadowy corruptions of ancient knowledge represent collective Karma for the neglect of "Theosophy as the rational explanation of things," the charges brought by these students, referring to the

"naïve empiricism" and the "imperialism" of science, are accurate enough. One needs only to read *The Secret Doctrine* for their verification.

Worlds Before Ours

In a new book, *Pumpkin Seed Point* (Sage Books, 1969), Frank Waters tells the story of the three years he spent living with the Hopi Indians in Arizona, acquiring a deeper understanding of their tribal beliefs and ways of life. A passage on Hopi traditions concerning the archaic past is extremely suggestive to anyone familiar with the Theosophical teachings on the great cycles of planetary and racial evolution; and one may think, also, that Mr. Waters cannot be unacquainted with these doctrines. He writes:

> Contemporary Hopi, Zuni, and many other Indian tribes, as well as the prehistoric Toltecs and Aztecs, believe in the myth that they lived successively on three successive worlds before coming to this one. What root race these Indians of Mesoamerica belonged to, what vanished or still-existent continent they came from, when, and how, no one knows. Their origin is lost in a time that is being continually pushed back to the edge of the one great mystery of life. Yet these documentary questions need not trouble us. The great myth of their Emergence, as the Hopis most aptly call their arrival on this continent, is the dramatized story of the emergence of consciousness from the great pool of the unconscious—the evolution of that consciousness of object and self which has enabled man alone to distinguish himself from the rest of nature.

Philosophy Reflected in Custom

Great sympathy for and understanding of the Indians pervades all the books of Frank Waters. As a boy, the book-jacket tells us, he lived for a time on the Navajo Reservation and spent many years with various Indian tribes. He is, it may be said, one of the few modern writers able to gain the trust of the Indians, to interpret them in a spirit faithful to their ancestral memories, and to give voice to their longings, now so difficult to express. The Hopis, and perhaps other pueblo tribes, sometimes seem living embodiments of ancient conceptions of meaning, and however much they may have forgotten, the forms of their belief, and sometimes the spirit, have carried forward symbolisms on which *The Secret Doctrine* throws much light. For example the customs, practices, and traditions of the Zuni Indians are used by H. P. Blavatsky to illustrate the presence in the New World of very ancient teachings concerning

the sevenfold nature of all things (*S.D.* II, 628-29).

Origin of Gunpowder

In "Pan-Dynamis," (THEOSOPHY for May), Roger Bacon is called the inventor of gunpowder, and more than one reader questioned this statement—it being widely believed that the ancient Chinese should be credited with this distinction. An investigation of the source of the statement led to a passage in *Isis Unveiled* (I, 413):

> Among the great mass of peoples plunged deep in the superstitious ignorance of the mediæval ages, there were but a few students of the Hermetic philosophy of old, who, profiting by what it had taught them, were enabled to forecast discoveries which are the boast of our present age; while at the same time the ancestors of our modern high-priests of the temple of the Holy Molecule, were yet discovering the hoof-tracks of Satan in the simplest natural phenomenon. Says Professor A. Wilder: "Roger Bacon . . . in his treatise on the *Admirable Force of Art and Nature,* devotes the first part of his work to natural facts. He gives us hints of gunpowder and predicts the use of steam as a propelling power. The hydraulic press, the diving bell and kaleidoscope are all described."

Occult Scientist

Then, in *The Secret Doctrine* (I, 581-82), it is said: The *Knowledge* of Roger Bacon did not come to this wonderful old magician by inspiration, but because he studied ancient works on magic and alchemy, having a key to the real meaning of words." A footnote continues:

> Thus, what the writer of the present work said ten years ago in *Isis Unveiled* (Vol. I) was prophetic, it seems. These are the words: "Many of these mystics, by following what they were taught by some treatises, secretly preserved from one generation to another, *achieved discoveries which would not be despised even in our modern days of exact sciences.* Roger Bacon, the friar, was laughed at as a quack, and is now generally numbered among 'pretenders' to magic art; but his discoveries were nevertheless accepted, and are now used by those who ridicule him the most. Roger Bacon belonged by right, if not by fact, to that Brotherhood which includes all those who study the occult sciences. Living in the thirteenth century, almost a contemporary therefore, of Albertus Magnus and Thomas Aquinas, his discoveries—such as gunpowder and optical glasses, and his mechanical achievements—were considered by everyone as so many miracles. He was accused of having made a compact with the Evil One."

A Modern Authority

The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* has the following concerning Gunpowder:

> There is some evidence that the Chinese possessed black powder in ancient times, but the evidence is not conclusive. It may be significant that saltpetre (or nitre), an essential ingredient of black powder, was mentioned for the first time in the writings of the Arabian Abd Allah, about A.D. 1200. Nevertheless, it may have been used in rockets or in "Roman candles" in the tenth century or even earlier. Among the many claimants of the honour of discovering black powder are Chinese, Hindus, Greeks, Arabs, English (Roger Bacon) and Germans (Berthold Schwartz)....

A "Knowing" Generation?

Some comments by Margaret Mead on the generation gap appear in *Science* for April 11, 1969. She says in part:

> For now, nowhere in the whole world are there any elders who know what the children know, no matter how remote and simple the societies in which the children live. In the past there were always some elders who knew more—in terms of experience, of having grown up within a system—than any children. Today there are none. It is not only that parents are no longer a guide, but that there are no guides, in the older sense of the term, whether one seeks them in one's own country, or in China, or in India. There are no elders who know what those who have been reared in the last twenty years know about what the next twenty years will be.

What Kind of Knowledge?

Many of the difficulties and puzzles of the generation gap seem implicit in this passage. In the first place, in what sense do the children "know" more than their elders? Their rejection of the horrors of modern war and their distaste for the pleasures, ostentations, and goals of the acquisitive society may be seen as a kind of knowledge. At the same time, however, the simplification of issues, the occasional resort to violence, and the attack on defenseless places of learning hardly seem exhibitions of understanding. In fact, the "knowing" of which Margaret Mead speaks may be mainly represented by inchoate moral longings which seldom found expression in the generation of their parents.

Ignorance of Means

There is, one might say, spontaneous insight in many of the

declarations of the dissenting youth of today, but not much evidence of a grasp of how constructive changes should take place. Time and experience of responsibility may bring some remedy for this, but plainly lacking is a knowledge of cycles and of the inner growth-processes which must be understood before it will be possible to create a society devoted to the purposes of soul evolution. Help in comprehending this age of "protest" is coming from such critics as Robert S. Morison (*Science,* July 11) and last year's Nobel Prize winner George Wald (in the *New Yorker* for March 22), who are showing the extreme moral ugliness of the modern world as it must appear to the young. Persons born since 1948 have not even the consolation of memory of better days. The meaning of Dr. Mead's observations is spelled out by teachers who have close contact with the coming generation. The young, they say, are protesting the loss of a future with some promise of human dignity in it.

Explanations Needed

Meanwhile, in an article in the *National Observer* for July 26, Walter F. Berns, who recently resigned as professor of government at Cornell University, speaks of "teachers who can, by their teaching and by their examples, show the best-endowed students the existence of a meaningful world away from the barricades and the world of the Organization Man." Such teachers can doubtless be found, but to engage the attention of serious students who feel immediate and compelling concern for the condition of the world, they will have to throw a much stronger light on the problems of human needs. And to accomplish this without the explanatory solvents provided by the doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation may prove increasingly difficult.

Clues in William Blake

Interestingly enough, the wisdom of a man who lived two hundred years ago is now receiving attention from social critics who recognize the importance of moral psychology for meeting present-day social dilemmas. In a similar age of turbulence and rapid change, William Blake struggled with the contradictions he saw in angry and violent solutions. While he felt a profound sympathy for those who were actively supporting the French and American revolutions, Blake became increasingly convinced that even sublime ideals would inevitably be betrayed if violence were the primary means relied upon for change. John Sutherland, writing in the *Nation* for July

28, sums up Blake's approach:

> The problem, apparently, is to find mental weapons which will expand the perceptions and sympathies of men—not rouse their indignation, hatred and fear. Blake's weapon was his art. And, in spite of its initial failure to find a large public, it may yet make more impression on human history than the polemics of Voltaire and Gibbon.

Spectres of Separateness

Blake's explanation of why it is impossible to devise a legalistic formula for separating right from wrong which will apply to everybody was that there is a basic duality pervading nature, including man. All men, no matter what their point of view, must come to terms with this fact, over and over again. It is this need which underlies the wide diversities of human experience. Sutherland continues:

> To the fearful, selfish ego—which Blake called the "spectre" in man—all revolutionary energy looks dangerous, and all liberal, humanistic hopes for peace seem mere cowardly delusions. Thus President Johnson and his advisers—ruled by their "spectres"—looked cynically and fearfully at revolution and threats of revolution in the Dominican Republic, Vietnam and elsewhere. Simultaneously, revolutionaries—ruled by their own "spectres"—feared that it would be sentimental foolishness to appeal nonviolently to their brothers, their oppressors. Both groups may have been right—and may still be right. Yet, in a stanza probably written a little after the turn of the nineteenth century, Blake had the courage to affirm:
>
> Each man is in his Spectre's power
> Until the arrival of that hour
> When his Humanity awake
> And cast his own Spectre into the Lake.

This duality, which can hardly be understood except through recognition of the continuing, immortal entity in man's constitution, is nevertheless ever-present in the human situation, and efforts to know more of the nature of this enduring entity and its bearing on current life might indeed be pursued in the environment Prof. Berns describes, where "ancient questions of philosophy and theology are honestly and seriously treated."

Natural Death

Recent advances in the technology of medicine compel a searching look by both medical men and laymen into such basic questions

as the meaning of life, the nature of death—what death is, even technically—and what are the obligations of human beings to one another in these areas. Walter W. Sackett, Jr., a general practitioner and a member of the Florida House of Representatives, has proposed an amendment to Florida's new constitution which would add to the Basic Rights Article simply the words, "to be permitted to die with dignity." Dr. Sackett believes that in circumstances in which hope of a meaningful life is irretrievably gone, the physician should be able, with the consent of relatives, to allow death to come naturally, instead of prolonging life by artificial means. The volume of mail he has received indicates the overwhelming approval of the public. Meanwhile, in England, a public health official, Dr. Kenneth Vickery, recently told a congress of the Royal Society of Health that a minimum age-limit of eighty should be set beyond which it would not be obligatory to prolong the life of patients artificially. (*New York Times,* April 30.)

Karma of Dilemmas

The proposal to assure "death with dignity" has natural appeal, yet so long as the meaning of both life and death remain obscure, implementing policies to serve this objective are bound to be difficult. The idea of a soul which takes up a body and leaves it when the time comes would at least clarify thinking on the subject. When the Hippocratic oath obliges a physician to maintain a vegetable sort of life in a body of no conceivable use to the ego held captive within, philosophic ignorance leads to materialistic excess. On the other hand, when there is no thought of an indwelling soul, euthanasia or "mercy killing" may seem to many to be the right thing in the case of a painful and hopeless disease. Such dilemmas are sometimes not easily solved from any point of view, and may themselves be an aspect of the Karma of mental confusion which comes to a civilization that continually defeats egoic purposes through practices and beliefs founded on a one-life basis.

Extraordinary Recoveries

Now that transplant surgery has raised the specter of the meaning of death as both a legal and an ethical question, the press brings accounts of difficult borderline cases and miraculous recoveries from what seemed a hopeless condition. The *Christian Science Monitor* (June 18) reports a girl who suffered severe brain damage,

was kept alive three weeks by machines, and who then regained consciousness, recovered, and graduated from a university, although doctors had predicted she would be an imbecile. Israeli surgeons have told of a case which calls into question the five criteria for determining death by "complete and irreversible cessation of cerebral function." As reported in *Science Magazine* last February, this was the case of a fifteen-year-old boy who fell into a deep cave. He reached the hospital in deep coma and was kept alive by artificial respiration. For fully two weeks there was no indication of any brain activity, while breathing was mechanically maintained and drugs were used to keep up his blood pressure. But a week later the boy regained consciousness and two months after was reported mentally and physically well.

Magic in Science?

The debate about heart transplants continues, with the most important comment—that the best way to get new organs is by developing a new body of one's own, in another incarnation—not being mentioned by any of the debaters. One curious side-effect of these operations is occasional symptoms of mental illness in the recipients of heart transplants—they sometimes think that the drug given to suppress the body's rejection mechanism is a "poison" and one man "thought the nurses and doctors wore masks to hide contemptuous mocking expressions." (*New York Evening Post,* May 7.) Chemistry and physiology, it was said in *The Secret Doctrine,* will be the magicians of the future. What sort of "magicians"?, one wonders.

"Spontaneous Generation"

In a current popular book on microbes—*Life on Man* (Viking Press) by Theodor Rosebury—there is the following in the chapter "The Facts of Life on Earth":

> Spontaneous generation of life, as Pasteur showed, cannot occur on earth today—or, if by some remote chance it could, it cannot lead to anything productive. . . . But spontaneous generation could have happened two billion years ago, given a further billion, more or less, for the needed organic material to have formed and piled up. In the beginning, and in due order of succession thereafter, with plenty of time for slips and failures and fresh starts, the necessary materials came to be present, the permitting temperatures arrived, and energy to make

the process go burst forth. The energy, as you must know, came ultimately from the sun, more immediately from lightning, and gradually from chemical sources as a supply got stored in the compounds that were accumulating. A billion years or so of such organic chemical accumulation were required before Darwin's "still more complex changes"—which must have happened countless times before they succeeded—finally led, once or many times, to the energy-producing and self-perpetuating thing we call life.

The Claim of Occultism

Apparently, there has not been much change in this phase of scientific theory. Speaking of the scientists of her day, H. P. Blavatsky wrote in *The Secret Doctrine*:

> . . . when we read "Force and Matter," and find that Emperor of Materialists, Buchner, repeating after Manu and Hermes, that "the plant passes imperceptibly into the animal, and the animal into man" (p. 85), we need only add "and man into a spirit," to complete the Kabalistic axiom. The more so, since on page 82 of the same work we read the following admission: . . . "Produced in the way of spontaneous generation . . . it is by the aid of intense natural forces and *endless periods of time* (that) there has progressively arisen that rich and infinitely modified organic world by which we are at present surrounded." . . . And (page 84) "Spontaneous generation played, no doubt, *a more important part in the primeval epoch than at present; nor can it be denied that in this way beings of a higher organization* were produced than now," for this is the claim of Occultism. (*S.D.* II, 718-19.)

Again—

> If spontaneous generation has changed its methods now, owing perhaps to accumulated material on hand, so as to almost escape detection, it was in full swing in the genesis of terrestrial life. (II, 151.)

But this, after all, is only a point of tangency between the occult teachings and the practical necessities of science—a desperate remedy for biology, which has no other way of conceiving of the origin of life. Behind the occult doctrine of living form is the conception of the astral formative principle, and behind that the ideation of Nature. The biophysicists have made some progress in discerning the presence of the astral body—calling it the morphogenetic field—but the idea that nature is ultimately the product of mind still remains unthought-of in the science of today.

Birds to the Rescue

Westways for July, 1966, describes a conservation project sponsored by the state of Washington which approaches the problems of forest pest control by means that enlist the aid of interested human beings as well as natural agencies. In 1964, Burt Hoffman, a forester with the Washington Department of Natural Resources, installed sixty-two bird houses in the Capitol Forest area as a four-year pilot study which might produce a remedy for insect damage and thus eliminate objectionable chemical pesticides. Public interest and participation have been useful and far-reaching:

> The Capitol Forest project has captured the imagination of the entire state. The Department of Natural Resources has received hundreds of requests for information on how to build a forest birdhouse and where to put it. A special pamphlet has been issued by the department which explains the project and offers advice, with illustrations, for birdhouse construction. and civic groups have asked for and received special educational tours of Hoffman's birdhouse area.
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> Boy Scouts, working with local Audubon groups, erected some 1,700 birdhouses last year on state lands and forests. Cub Scouts are building them in the Seattle area as part of their yearly conservation program; Girl Scouts, 4-H Clubs and the general public have also gone into birdhouse building.

A Good Old Idea

This seems to be one way in which human beings can compensate in an organic way for certain of the perhaps inevitable inroads that our kind of civilization inflicts on forests. Modern forestry practices, such as pruning of dead branches and clearing away brush, improve the appearance and value of forest stands, but deprive many kinds of birds of natural nesting places. They go elsewhere, abandoning forested areas to hordes of insects. The idea of control of pests by creating habitats for their natural enemies is not a new one, but has been a matter of practice in foreign countries for many years.

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